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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Your glory endures through the seasons and Your divine majesty sustains us.

Lead the Members of this body to a faithfulness that fulfills Your purposes. Keep them steadfast in the faith that You are at work in our world, ordering their steps and preparing them for victory. Use them to create laws that will extend Your kingdom in the hearts of the people of our Nation and world. As the seasons change, remind them that in all generations You have been our dwelling place, and though we are swept away like a dream, You are God from everlasting to everlasting. Guide the deliberations, debates, and decisions of this day. Activate each of us to love, encourage, and bless others.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 17, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we will have an hour of morning business today. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans the second half. Senator STEVENS is going to be recognized for up to 7 minutes following any time Senator MCCONNELL and I use. Following that period of morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill, Calendar No. 280.

Last night, with the cooperation of all Members, the Senate concluded action on the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill. It is the sixth appropriations bill we have acted upon. Today, we will begin consideration of the seventh appropriations bill.

At 1 p.m. today, the Congress will honor the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet with the awarding of the highest civilian honor—the Congressional Gold Medal. In view of this ceremony, the Senate will be in recess from 1 to 2 p.m. today.

Members should expect votes throughout the day and into the early evening as we move forward with the consideration of this bill.

APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to underscore and confirm we are working hard to try to get a bill or bills to the

President as quickly as we can. The conferences are moving along well. I instructed my folks to make sure that Republicans know what is going on with all these conference reports. I think we have to show good faith that they are going to be some real conferences, and I am confident that will take place.

With all our new rules, with the earmarking rules we have, we cannot do things as quickly as we used to. But there has been work going on between the staffs—Democratic and Republican staffs—on both sides of this building with the Appropriations subcommittees. As a result of that, I think the final conference product should move fairly quickly.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

FISA REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as the House prepares to take up the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, I wish to remind our colleagues what we decided about this program a little over 2 months ago.

In August, a bipartisan Senate majority voted to embrace the two principles behind the original FISA law in 1978: that foreign terrorists overseas are a legitimate target—a legitimate target—for warrantless surveillance, and that Americans at home are not.

We did this because we had been informed by the Director of National Intelligence that advances in technology and an outdated provision in law had made it impossible for the intelligence community to act on the first of these principles, causing us to miss significant actionable intelligence.

The Senate responded to this information accordingly. We addressed the

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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